taken other steps which include reducing controls through licensing, simplification of procedures for export, activisation of Board of Trade, bilateral discussion with selected countries, interaction with national organisations of trade and industry, etc.

Decline in export

68. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the growth of export has declined during the financial year 1991-92;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what remedial measures have been taken to plug the loopholes and increase the exports during the financial year 1992-93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) In rupee terms, India's aggregate exports increased by 30.8% from Rs. 23189 crores during April-December 1990 to Rs.30332 crores during April-December 1991.

The trade data is compiled on financial year basis. According to the current estimates, India's exports to the General Currency Area (GCA) countries increased from US $ 10636 million during April-December 1990 to US $ 11310 million during April-December 1991 thereby registering an increase of 6.34%.

India's exports to the Rupee Payment Area (RPA) countries declined by 46.53% from US $ 2494 million during April-December 1990 to US $ 1333 million during April-December 1991.

Government are of the view that exports to GCA countries and RPA countries should be disaggregated and viewed separately. The correct conclusion would, therefore, be that exports to GCA countries showed a modest increase of about 6% in dollar terms while exports to RPA countries showed a decline of about 46% in dollar terms.

The reasons for the decline in exports to RPA countries are mainly external and include the political changes that have taken place in the erstwhile Soviet Union.

Other factors which have affected export growth include a slow-down in the world economy, recession in major developed countries, unavoidable import compression and high rate of export credit.

(c) The Government introduced a package of trade policy reforms aimed at strengthening of export incentives, eliminating substantial volume of import licensing and optimal import compression. REP licences have been replaced by a new instrument named Eximscrips. These will be the means of obtaining access to certain categories of imports of raw materials, components and spares. The system of advance licensing as an instrument of export promotion has also been strengthened. Government has decided to allow established exporters to open foreign currency accounts in aproved banks and allow exporters to raise external credits, pay for export related imports from such accounts, and credit export proceeds to such accounts. Besides, Government have taken other steps which include reducing controls through licensing, simplification of procedures for exports, activisation of Board of Trade, bilateral discussion with selected countries, interaction with national organisations of trade and industry etc.

Export market for woollen items

69. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that political changes in the then Soviet Union have had an adverse effect on exports of woollen items to that country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have explored other foreign markets for exports of woollens; and

(d) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The political and economic dislocate former Soviet Union in the recent past generally had adverse impact on Indian exports to that country, in that of wool and woollen products.

(c) and (d) Government is fully seized

of the matter continuous efforts are being made to diversify the export markets for this product.

India's accord on TRIPS.

70. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an accord on TRIPS is believed to be important to ensure agreement at the Uruguay Round of talks under General Agreement on Trade and Tariff as reported in the Economic Times of the 28th January, 1992;

(b) whether it is also true in respect of agriculture; and

(c) if so, what are the details of Government's position on both which must be consistent with national interests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The Uruguay Round negotiations cover a wide range of issues including Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and Agriculture. These have been among the most contentious issues in the negotiations.

In these negotiations India had sought appropriate provisions to safeguard her interests. In the area of TRIPs our main concern related to food security and access to health care at affordable prices. In Agriculture, we sought exemption from the commitment to reduce the level of protection and subsidies for developing countries.

In TRIPs, although the norms and standards for intellectual property envisaged in the Dunkel proposals are to a large extent based on the demands of the developed countries, a transition period of 5 years has been provided for all developing countries. Developing countries which do not grant product patent protection in certain areas of technology have been given a further period of 5 years transition in respect of such areas of technology.

In Agriculture, developing countries have been granted only partial exemption from the reduction commitments envisaged in the Dunkel proposals. However, preliminary estimates indicate that the levels of support granted by India to its agriculture would be exempted.

ACCI's reaction on Dunkel's Draft Proposals

71. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to accept Dunkel's trade package as it contains several features which are of country's long term trade interest;

(b) if so, whether the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry has also urged upon Government to accept Dunkel's trade package;

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereto; and

(d) what are the details of the Dunkel's trade package and by when a decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (d) In the phase of the Uruguay Round of negotiations which concluded on 20th December, 1991, a serious attempt was made to resolve the differences amongst the 108 participating countries. As a result many differences were narrowed down while others remained outstanding particulary in the crucial areas of trade in agrilculture, trade in textiles, rules on anti-dumping and Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. To break the impasse, Mr. Arthur Dunkel Director General of GATT presented proposals for consideration of Governments, suggesting compromises in areas in which differences persisted.

Government are in the process of examining the Dunkel proposals. Government's preliminary examination shows that the Dunkel text contains both positive and negative features from India's point of view.

At the meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee of GATT held in Geneva on 13.1.1992 to consider the Dunkel Package, participants expressed less than full satisfaction with the Dunkel proposals. However, there was a willingness to work further on the basis